THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) and (b) South Central Railway had carried out a techno-economic feasibility study for Circular and allied rail transit system for Hyderabad Metropolitan area. The report has been forwarded to the State Government. The provision of Circular Railway being essentially a Metropolitan transport scheme for easing the commuter traffic conditions, the State Government has been advised to obtain the clearance of the Planning Commission for conducting a detailed survey and execution of the project with provision of funds outside normal Railway Plan with dividend free liability.

Norms for affiliation of new degree colleges with universities

767. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what are the norms prescribed by the University Grants Commission for the grant of affiliation by universities to new degree colleges; and

(b) what is the number of such colleges that came into existence during each of the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE (SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI): (a) The UGC has not prescribed any norms for granting affiliation to colleges by the universities.

(b) According to information available, the total number of colleges in 1982-83 was 5039 which increased to 5246 in 1983-84 and 5482 in 1984-85.

Improvement of Highways in Madhya Pradesh

768. SHRIMATI RATAN KUMARI: Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state the amount earmarked for 1986-87 for improving the conditions of National Highways passing through Madhya Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): A sum of Rs. 1700.00 lakhs has been earmarked for allotment to Madhya Pradesh for development of National Highways (Original Works) in the State.

Discontinuance of road tax collection through Post Offices

769. SHRI KALPNATH RAI: Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the system of collection of road tax through Post Office for the current year 1986-87 has been discontinued;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what alternative arrangement have been made for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Delhi Administration have intimated that the system of collection of Road Tax through Post Offices has been replaced by the new one with effect from 1-4-1986. It is reported that the Postal authorities has asked for enhancement of the remuneration per token from Rs. 2.25 to Rs. 7.50, which was considered uneconomic, since 80 per cent of the annual road tax collection are made through the offices of the Directorate of Transport itself. The collection of road tax in Delhi is now done through the specified branches of Central Bank of India and counters of Automobile Association of Upper India.